

File Copy



CHARLESTON PENINSULA

SPECIAL AREA MANAGEMENT PLAN

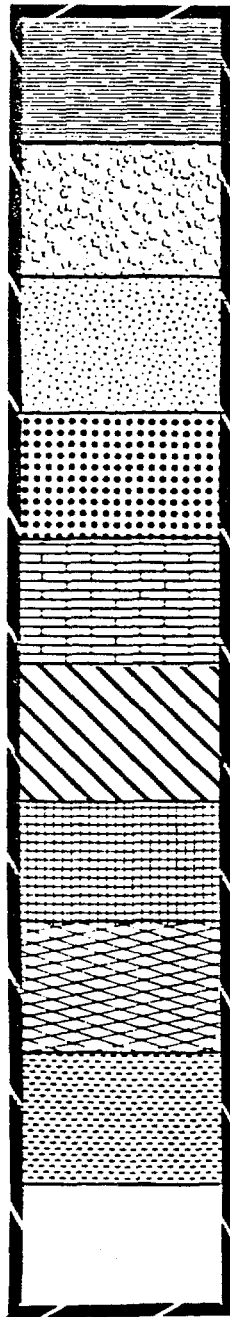
**ACTIVITY
AREA
ANALYSIS**

HT
391
.S6
C54
1984

Property of CSC Library

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE NOAA
COASTAL SERVICES CENTER
2234 SOUTH HOBSON AVENUE
CHARLESTON, SC 29405-2413

APR 10 1991



LEGEND

MARSH

PARK & OPEN SPACE

PARKING

INDUSTRIAL

RESIDENTIAL

COMMERCIAL

INSTITUTIONAL

OFFICES & BANKS

COMMERCIAL &
RESIDENTIAL

VACANT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION.....	1
ASHLEY RIVER NORTH.....	5
ASHLEY RIVER SOUTH.....	12
COOPER RIVER WATERFRONT.....	28
CHARLOTTE STREET WATERFRONT.....	37
MORRISON DRIVE AREA.....	40
COOPER RIVER NORTH.....	45

INTRODUCTION

This study, done as a part of the Charleston Peninsula Special Area Management Plan, analyzes the development trends which are likely to be happening along the waterfront over the next ten years. The study reviews proposed development projects on a parcel by parcel basis and identifies development issues, trends and permitting requirements which will need to be addressed by developers, property owners and the permitting agencies responsible for granting permits to undertake the various projects.

Many different groups, governmental and private, will play various roles in determining how the Charleston waterfront is used and developed. The first step is to recognize the importance of this unique area and that changes are imminent. The Charleston Peninsular SAMP promotes that revelation, and for the first time provides a comprehensive picture of the waterfront as it exists today and as it may develop in the future. As with any planning tool, the informational elements of the SAMP are not set in concrete, and proposals discussed within the document may change quickly and dramatically. Conflicts between existing laws, policies, regulations and development proposals are unavoidable. These conflicts are discussed in the study as an information coordination effort and should save valuable planning and administrative time. It should be recognized that final arbitrations in these conflicts will involve numerous federal, state and local commissions, agencies, and boards. This SAMP effort will hopefully guide those entities in carrying out their specific duties.

Study Area Boundaries:

Establishing the physical boundaries of the study area was the easiest phase of the organization process. The plan was a peninsular waterfront plan. The study area was limited to include only those properties that

bordered on wetlands or the waterfront. Six areas were later designated as "activity areas" or places where a great deal of redevelopment activity was likely to be take place in the near future. It was these areas that the plan addresses in detail. These areas are shown on exhibit 1.

Information Collected:

Determining the information that was needed for the project was also important. Because this Special Area Management Plan was a collective effort between the Coastal Council and the City of Charleston and each group had access to different information sources, it was important that project tasks and the information assembly process be coordinated as much as possible. This coordination was done near the beginning of the process.

The following basic information was readily available and was assembled and shared between the staffs:

1. Past Coastal Council permits issued within study area.
2. Past City building permits or zoning action taken within study area.
3. Aerial photography.
4. Base maps of the area.
5. City of Charleston planning studies affecting area.
6. Coastal Council development regulations and policies.
7. The drainage master plan for the area.

In addition, it was determined that additional information was needed. Accordingly, the following new information was produced by survey and mapping:

1. A new series of aerial photography.
2. An existing land use survey.
3. An existing water use survey (piers, docks, bulkheads, revetments,...).
4. Interviews with property owners within the development activity areas to determine development plans, waterfront problems, desires, etc.

After collection and review of this information, the findings were used to prepare the comments that are presented in the different sections that follow. Coastal Council staff comments were used in the preparation of the "Coastal Council Permits Needed" section and City of Charleston staff comments were used in the preparation of the "City Permits Needed Section" for each individual parcel.

All of the information obtained from this study was used in making the evaluations listed in the Executive Summary/Policies Section of the Special Area Management Plan. It is in this section, that the plan attempts to identify any problems that are likely to occur and then suggest ways that these problems can be addressed.

Advisory Committee:

Before the data collection phase of the plan began, an advisory committee was appointed by Mayor Riley to represent a variety of interests and to serve as a sounding board for developing the policy recommendations of the plan. This committee has been very helpful and contributed greatly in the preparation of the policy recommendations of the plan. The following people unselfishly devoted their time and efforts to this task:

Mr. Hugh Lane, Jr.

Mr. John Hassell

Mr. Roy Owen

Mr. David Bartles

Mrs. Alice Levkoff

Mr. Frank Crawford

Mrs. Barbara Ellison

Mr. Joe Griffith

Ms. Shelia Wertimer

Mr. Russell Campbell

Mr. Thomas A. McQuade

Mrs. Edith Calliham

Ms. Beth Sparre

ASHLEY RIVER NORTH

The Ashley River North Area was selected for more detailed study because of the variety of land uses presently located in the area and the potential for change which is likely to occur in the area during the next ten to fifteen years. The area can be generally described as being bounded on the south by Mt. Pleasant Street, on the west by the Ashley River, on the east by I-26 and on the north by Charleston's northern city limit. The scope of this study is limited to studying only those waterfront properties adjoining the Ashley River.

At this time, a mixture of heavy industry, light industry, warehousing, scattered residential, and semi-public uses are found within the area. Because of the neighborhood's proximity to I-26, the industrial and shipping uses appear to dominate land use patterns and give an industrial character or appearance to the area. On most waterfront properties a large expanse of intertidal marsh is usually located between the high land and the waters edge. This marsh is undoubtedly providing a valuable function in serving as a natural filter for storm water runoff and acting as an erosional buffer for the adjoining highland property.

In interviews with property owners and reviewing permit applications submitted by applicants to both the City of Charleston and the Coastal Council, it has become apparent that the value of a waterfront location has made many of these properties attractive to developers of multifamily condominium and marina projects. Currently, within this relatively small area, two marina projects and three condominium projects have been submitted for approval or discussed with Coastal Council or City staff members. This type of land use change could be the beginning of a trend to convert this area from an industrial oriented region to a residential and commercial/water related area.

The current Charleston City Zoning Ordinance is a pyramid type, one which allows less objectionable uses to be built in a less restrictive zoning category. Under the present zoning ordinance, marinas would be allowable uses in the industrially zoned sections of this area, and conversion of industrially zoned land to a marina would be subject to meeting only parking, setback and other minor considerations. Residential developments are allowed by right within a light industrial zone. Within a heavy industrial zone residential units must be approved by the Board of Adjustment. While building code requirements for industrially zoned lands are more restrictive than those required in residential zones, variances are routinely granted. Coastal Council permits would also be needed to build docks, marinas, bulkheads, storm water discharge pipes, and any other activities taking place in the marshes or wetland areas.

The potential for change in this area involves several important issues. These issues will have an impact on not only the way that this particular area changes, but will also affect future development patterns in the rest of the City as well. Briefly, the important issues relating to the development of this area are as follows:

1. The development of multifamily residential and marina land uses in this area will remove industrial land from an already small stock available within the City of Charleston. Presently, Charleston only has a small number of suitable areas for industrial development and removal of this area for industrial expansion could further limit some industrial development opportunities, especially those needing a waterfront location.
2. Two factors will control water accessibility to this area. First, the depth of the channel and secondly, the height of any bridges which cannot be raised. Regarding the channel depth: The Corps of Engineers has not maintained a channel in the Ashley River since 1955. The controlling

depth or shallowest point in the channel is located just off the Battery, with a depth of about 15 feet mean sea level. Generally, the channel north of the Ashley River Bridge averages about 20 feet in depth; however, the shallowest point in the channel will limit the up river access.

Regarding bridge heights: The building of the James Island Bridge to a height of 55 feet above mean sea level will also limit the use of some properties for water access by larger ships. Consequently, the Ashley River will not be as well suited to heavy port development as the Cooper River area. The proposed bridge height and the shallow channel could limit the usefulness of the area for some water related uses which require water access by large ships:

3. The construction of marinas in the area will cause traffic problems if boats using marinas are higher than the bridges connecting the lower peninsula and West Ashley areas. An increase in this type of boat traffic will cause an increased number of bridge openings to occur. Currently, openings of the bridges are restricted during the weekday morning and daily afternoon rush hours. However, these are not absolute restrictions, and the bridge opening restrictions can be circumvented by giving twelve hours advance notice. With the current number of boats docking north of the Ashley River Bridges, between the hours of 7:00AM and 7:00PM the bridges were opened 335 times in 1983. In the same year approximately 86,400 vehicles crossed the bridge each day. An increased number of bridge openings coupled with a corresponding increase in traffic volume would create traffic backups throughout the City.

4. The redevelopment of land in the area has the opportunity to improve existing environmental conditions. As storm water systems are upgraded to meet Coastal Council Guidelines, and water and sewer systems are rebuilt or expanded to handle increased demand, environmental conditions are

likely to be improved over present levels. These improvements, brought about by increased development activity, could be beneficial to the adjacent marshes and Ashley River.

The following parcels of land are likely to be important in the future development of the Ashley River North area. A brief history and development scenario gained from interviews or prior permit applications is given for each parcel:

SUNNYSIDE STREET - Approximately 8.5 acres on the Ashley River at the foot of Sunnyside Street was submitted to the City for a rezoning from SR 1 (single family) to DR 12 (diverse residential 12 units/acre) in order to construct a 100 unit condominium complex. The Planning Department staff will recommend to the Planning and Zoning Commission that the property be zoned DR-6 (6 units/acre) allowing approximately fifty-one units.

HERRIOT STREET - An application to fill wetlands and build a causeway and boat ramp in the Ashley River has been submitted to the Coastal Council and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and been denied. This application, at a site owned by the German Rifle Club located at the foot of Herriot Street and Ashley River, has been denied. Long range development plans for this property are not known.

MECHANIC AND PETTY STREET - A proposal has been discussed with the City of Charleston planning staff to construct a 60 unit residential H.U.D. project on 3.68 acres. The rezoning application from light industrial to DR1 (diverse residential limited to 60 units) has been approved by the Planning and Zoning Commission and will be finalized pending City Council's approval. Construction is expected to commence shortly thereafter. This rezoning petition has been withdrawn.

BRASWELL SHIPYARDS/CAROLINA DRY DOCK - These are two separate parcels presently controlled by the Braswell Corporation. A permit application is presently pending before the Coastal Council and Corps of Engineers to construct 44 marina slips in the Ashley River, a travel lift pier and dry storage for small boats on the highland. The impact of the project on the opening and closing of the Ashley River Bridges is the single most important issue of the permit decision. Environmental concerns in this particular section of the River are of lesser impact because of the Ashley River's Water Quality classification of "S.C.". This is the lowest salt water classification. Shellfish harvesting and swimming are not allowed uses and the environmental impacts of a small marina are likely to be small and controlled through design considerations and regulatory authority. Other plans for the property include the construction of some additional industrial property on the highland site and a possible continuation of a shipyard operation on a portion of the site. However, there is some speculation that the property zoned heavy industrial will be sold to residential and marina developers.

ASHLEY RIVER INDUSTRIES - This property is located on the Ashley River just north of Braswell Shipyard and is occupied by Charleston Shipyards and Microelectronics. Charleston Shipyards is presently not in business. Short term development plans call for reopening of the shipyard for light repair and building a new campground and drydock storage for 250 boats. City of Charleston permits to construct the campground have not yet been applied for. Long range plans cited during the property owner interviews indicate a desire to construct a marina accommodating 128 boats and a continuation of light ship repair, drydock and campground business; these uses are permitted in the heavy industrial zone. The same considerations mentioned in the Braswell Shipyards

marina pertaining to bridge openings and the environmental factors of this section of the river are applicable to this project as well.

MOBIL CHEMICAL COMPANY - This property is located north of Ashley River Industries near the northern city limit. The immediate plans of the Company are to expand the existing plant, to enlarge the manufacturing facilities and to increase the size of the holding tanks. No long term plans other than this expansion are expected. The site does not use the Ashley River waterfront. Problems cited during the interviews were concerns about the buildup of residential areas and hospital facilities in a potentially dangerous and industrially zoned area.

ASHLEY RIVER SOUTH

The Ashley River South is dominated by recreational uses. The area generally runs along the Ashley River waterfront from the Coast Guard Station at Broad Street and Lockwood Boulevard, to the northern end of Brittlebank Park. Two marinas, a city park, a community lake, a motel and several small businesses catering to water related activities give this section of the City's waterfront a decidedly recreational character. Plans for this area call for increased utilization of the waterfront parcels of land for recreational purposes with an emphasis to providing a better means for pedestrian access along the waterfront, increased use of the City Marina, and more utilization of the old city yacht basin and Brittlebank Park by making improvements to existing facilities.

Specifically, the following improvements are proposed, some are likely to be granted approval by both the City of Charleston and the Coastal Council while others will be difficult to permit. A parcel by parcel analysis follows:

PEDESTRIAN WALKWAY

The City of Charleston would like to construct a pedestrian walkway along a path bordering the Ashley River connecting the Battery to Brittlebank Park. This will provide another means of allowing the public to enjoy the waterfront. The proposed walk will be approximately 4 feet wide and constructed in the existing right of way on highland. Costs of construction, availability of funding and aesthetic considerations will dictate the choice of materials. Along several points of the walkway, the distance between the edge of the wetland and Lockwood Boulevard is less than 2 feet of separation and locating the walkway on the highland will not be feasible. In these areas, the wetlands will be bridged by a foot bridge of the same width as the sidewalk. Construction is anticipated to occur after 1987. Because of

inadequate depth of lots for private development, the City should acquire the right to use of the lots west of Lockwood Boulevard and Harleston Village for this crucial connection of the pedestrian walkway.

Coastal Council permits needed: Permits will be needed to construct the walkway over an estimated 500-700 feet of wetland area adjacent to Lockwood Drive and the Ashley River.

City permits needed: Only a building permit is necessary as the property is zoned SR-2 (single family residential), DR-1F (diverse residential), LB (limited business) and GB (general business) allowing the construction of a walkway park by right. In addition, the walkway design must receive approval by the Board of Architectural review. The City encourages private property owners to incorporate the river walkway into their own plans. Necessary variances for new development on these private sites can be recommended on a case by case basis where donation of their portion of the river walkway infringes their development potential.

OLD YACHT BASIN

This site affords great opportunities for water oriented recreation, a recreational need which is becoming harder to provide as more waterfront property is developed for private purposes. Many people do not have access to a boat or car which greatly restricts their ability to fish, crab or simply enjoy the water. This site, with its central location, can provide an opportunity to pursue water related activities within the City.

The City of Charleston has recently compiled a Municipal Marina Master Plan (September, 1984) which calls for a number of improvements to the Old Yacht Basin area. In contrast to the municipal marina across from this site, the plans for the Old Yacht Basin will emphasize its natural and passive recreational attraction in a non-commercial atmosphere. These recommendations generally call for improved landscaping, providing more park furniture,

construction of perimeter paths, providing a limited amount of parking and the building of a boardwalk for fishing and crabbing.

Coastal Council permits needed: The Coastal Council recognizes that providing public access opportunities along the coast is very important. In fact, it is one of the Council's fundamental objectives. The site offers an excellent opportunity for accomplishing this objective and efforts to increase access should be encouraged.

A permit from the Coastal Council will be necessary to construct a boardwalk or crabbing dock inside the basin. Preliminary design discussions indicate that the design of the structure will be compatible with permitting rules and regulations governing the construction of docks and piers.

City permits needed: Only a building permit will be necessary as the property is zoned residentially, permitting by right, parks and playgrounds not operated as a business for profit. The old yacht basin is in the Old and Historic District. Thus, a Board of Architectural Review Certificate of Appropriateness must be sought.

MUNICIPAL MARINA

Various improvements to the City Marina

The City of Charleston has begun to plan for the improvement and upgrading of the Municipal Marina. The Municipal Marina Master Plan, referred to earlier, is the document which the city intends to use to begin development of a number of activities within the marina property. These activities involve such things as renovation of the old rice mill, development of highland property, demolition of buildings, and traffic circulation changes which come completely under the City's jurisdiction and regulatory authority. However, a number of other proposed activities will take place within or along the waterfront and will also come under the Coastal Council's permitting

authority. Specifically, Coastal Council approval will be needed to undertake the following activities:

- Construction of a bulkhead in front of the rice mill building.
- Construction of a 30 foot wide pedestrian walkway over the water in front of the rice mill building.
- Relocation of the boat ramp to Brittlebank Park. The primary purpose for doing this is to remove peak parking demands (up to 150 spaces) by trailered vehicles.
- In the northern area of the marina, the construction of the James Island Expressway will be a significant influencing factor. This construction will take away about 4 acres of marina property and upwards of 120 parking spaces could be lost. To mitigate this loss, the plan and the James Island Bridge Environmental Impact Statement call for filling of a marsh area located adjacent to the Charleston Yacht Club area to regain an estimated 55 parking spaces.
- The number of the slips inside the marina seawalls or breakwaters will be increased by reconfiguration and expansion. An additional 150 to 200 slips can be created inside of the present breakwaters.
- The fuel dock will be relocated to the outside edge of the marina.
- Sections of the seawall will be removed and a second entrance to the marina will be added to improve tidal flushing and boat traffic circulation.

Coastal Council permits will be required to construct the bulkhead in front of the rice mill building. Bulkhead permits are generally issued with the provisions that they do not result in the removal of wetland vegetation and that follow the existing erosion scarp line as closely as possible. These considerations should be incorporated into the application for the permit.

The permit to construct the pedestrian walkway in front of the rice mill should be an asset to the marina area. Generally, with proper design no problems are expected.

The closing of the boat ramp at the municipal marina does not require a Coastal Council permit. However, a permit to construct a new boat ramp at Brittlebank Park would be needed. One important consideration in all permit decisions is "does the project improve public access opportunities?" The demand for useable boat ramps increases each year, and any closing of existing, heavily used boat ramps would no doubt be opposed by the Council unless a suitable replacement ramp is provided. The growth of trailerable boats in Charleston County has been well documented, and as this population of small boat owners grows, the need for more boat ramps and more access points to coastal rivers will increase. Replacement ramps and additional launching facilities need to be constructed to meet this demand.

A permit will be needed to fill the wetland area for parking spaces. The Coastal Council's Permitting Rules and Regulations state that "dredging and filling in wetland areas shall be undertaken only if the proposed activity is water dependent and there are no feasible alternatives."¹ In order for the permit to be granted, the City must demonstrate that there is a need, the need can be satisfied by the project, and that no feasible alternatives to the filling exists. This will no doubt be a difficult permit to obtain as there will certainly be an environmental loss caused by the filling of the marsh.

A permit to rearrange and increase the number of slips inside of the existing breakwater structure would be needed. Problems in obtaining the permit are not anticipated, as a rearrangement to provide more boat slips in this location would clearly be of public benefit.

A permit to relocate the fuel facilities to near the outside marina wall would be needed. At the time the fuel facilities are relocated, the marine sanitation device should also be relocated to the same location.

A permit will be needed to add a new entrance into the existing breakwater. Permits will also be needed to remove several panels to increase flow through the marina. Problems in obtaining the permit to locate a second entrance are not likely to occur. It is recommended that all of these rearrangements occurring inside the marina walls be done concurrently in a single permit application.

One other permit which might be needed in the future would be a Coastal Council permit to locate commercial structures inside the marina on floating structures. Locating floating structures used as stores or offices within the marina could constitute a change in use of the marina and any change of use of the wetland critical area requires the issuance of a permit. It has been recognized in the city's marina study and in other studies that marina space is scarce and is consequently a valuable commodity. It is therefore, strongly recommended that not only the municipal but all marina slip rentals be limited to recreational boat owners and that the use of marina slips for floating offices or stores be prohibited by both the City and Coastal Council. As recommended by Charleston County Marina Impact Study, the City can regulate the use of boats docked in its marinas by defining the uses permitted in various types of marinas.

City permits needed: As the property is zoned LB (limited business) only a building permit is necessary. Depending upon redevelopment plans a parking, height or setback variance could be required. This area is in the Old and Historic District, thus the Board of Architectural Review must approve any plans.

JAMES ISLAND BRIDGE

The State Department of Highways and Public Transportation intends to build the James Island Expressway connecting James Island with downtown

Charleston. The terminus of the bridge will be located just north of the municipal marina on land currently owned by the City of Charleston and leased to C&S Bank for a branch bank and to the Ashley Marina for parking and storage. The construction of the bridge is considered a high priority item by the CHATS Plan (Charleston Area Transportation Study) and construction could begin as early as 1985. The construction of the expressway terminus on the peninsula will directly impact the marina by the taking of one pier and eliminating up to 120 parking spaces and occupying the two properties mentioned above. The construction will also eliminate two of the highway access points from Lockwood Boulevard and will probably increase noise considerably. However, the major impact will not take place on the marina property but instead in West Ashley across the river. Constructing the intersection of the Highway 61 connector and James Island Bridge at Albermarle Point will occupy the site which the City has used for years as the marina's highland dredge spoil disposal site. This site is the only location in the vicinity of the marina available to receive spoil from dredging operations. New development in and around Albermarle Point has over the years removed other alternative sites. The lack of a highland spoil disposal site may in future years create problems for the marina. Siltation of the basin will continue to occur and the distance to a highland spoil disposal area is also likely to increase. Consequently, costs for maintenance dredging could increase significantly. While original plans incorporated a pedestrian walkway and a bikeway along the James Island Bridge, they were deleted due to budget constraints. In conjunction with the Ashley River walkway and the Tourism Impact and Management Study, which encourages the promotion of bicycle and pedestrian circulation, the City is working to have this public feature reinstated in the Highway Department Plans.

Coastal Council permits needed: On March 23, 1979 the Department of Highways and Public Transportation was issued a permit to construct the James Island Bridge and approaches. The permit was renewed on July 15, 1984 and is valid until July 15, 1987. Major realignment of the project would require that an amendment to the permit be granted or that a new permit be secured.

City permits needed: Only a building permit will be necessary for this project.

ASHLEY MARINA

The Ashley Marina is a public marina located off Lockwood Drive, just north of the Municipal Marina and south of the Charleston Inn. Immediate plans already approved and permitted will allow the marina to expand the docking facilities to about 200 slips. Unapproved short term projects which the owners would like to undertake include constructing a small dry stack marina on a highland site leased from the City of Charleston, (land which is scheduled to be taken when the James Island Bridge is built), and building a small restaurant on pilings over water. Neither City building permits or Coastal Council permits have been obtained for either project. The owner's long term plans call for building a 63,000 square foot building on the highland property housing retail, restaurant, office uses and an inn. However, permits from the City to allow construction of this facility have also not yet been issued. If the multi-use building is built, a bulkhead along the water's edge is also proposed to be built.

Coastal Council permits needed: On October 5, 1982 a permit was issued to the Ashley Marina to allow an additional 56 slips to be built in the Ashley River. This expansion has been partially completed.

A permit to construct the restaurant, inn, and office and retail uses on piles over water would have to be obtained. These uses constitute a non water-dependent structure; that is, uses which are not completely dependent upon a waterfront location in order to function. Examples of water dependent activities include fish houses, some warehouses, and some marina related buildings such as a dock masters office, etc. Secondly, the uses described are only vaguely related to the operation of the marina, an inn, restaurant, and office and retail space are not vital parts of the operation of the marina and allowing building over water on pilings would be difficult to permit. The Coastal Zone Management Plan is quite specific:

In critical areas of the Coastal Zone, it is Council policy that:

"Non water-dependent structures such as parking garages, apartments, restaurants and shops have been built in the past on pilings over wetland areas. Such construction presents unnecessary encroachment of the aquatic ecosystem by shading out the underlying vegetation. Nonwater dependent structures shall be discouraged from being sited over water and/or wetland areas. Only when public need is demonstrated and no feasible alternative sites are available should consideration be given towards approval of the proposed structure." (R: 30-12(M))²

Demonstration of a public need and an implied public benefit is one requirement of the policy which deals with filling or building over pilings. In the past, Coastal Council decisions have completely refused to allow filling of wetlands for commercial or residential uses and have severely limited expansion of buildings on pilings over wetlands or water.

The key elements which the Coastal Council will be likely to use in ruling on this permit if applied for will be:

- a) A demonstration of a public need.
- b) A demonstration that the highland site is too small to allow a reasonable use of the area.
- c) A finding that no feasible highland sites are available which could be used to locate the buildings.
- d) A finding that the proposed uses can demonstrate some degree of water dependency.
- e) A review indicating that the environmental impact of the activity will be minimal or nonexistent.

In the past similar proposals have been denied.

The dry storage marina, if built on highland, would not come under Coastal Council permitting jurisdiction; however, a boat ramp, marine railway, or travel lift to launch the boats would require a Coastal Council permit.

A permit to build a bulkhead would probably be the easiest to obtain provided that the bulkhead is not built over any vegetated areas and it follows the existing erosional scarp line and is constructed according to Council regulations. Additionally, large scale new construction would probably come under the Coastal Council's Storm Water Management Guidelines through either the direct permitting process or certification of any other state or federal permits required to build the project.

City permits needed: This property is zoned GB (General Business). Any development plans will be governed by a judicial decree for settlement of a lawsuit. In addition, this property does lie within the Board of Architectural Review's jurisdiction.

CHARLESTON INN PROPERTY

Minor improvements to the existing hotel will be made during the next several years. The pending construction of the James Island Expressway will greatly affect future development plans for the property. A "wait and see" position has been taken by the hotel's owners to determine what impact the expressway will have on future development plans. Long range plans for the structure could involve the demolition of the present building with the replacement consisting of a new hotel or combination hotel and condominium project. Considering the scarcity of waterfront property, it appears that this site is underutilized. If demolition occurs waterfront plans would be prepared for a replacement of the existing bulkhead, dredging the mudflat in front of the hotel and expansion of the existing pier to allow an increased number of boat slips.

Coastal Council permits needed: Permits will be needed to reconstruct the existing bulkhead, perform the dredging operation and construct the docks and piers. Reconstruction of the bulkhead following the present scarp line is not expected to be a problem. The dredging of the mudflat could present a problem due to a lack of a highland spoil site and any unforeseen environmental effects that might occur. Initial and maintenance dredging will require highland storage of spoil material each time the area is dredged. Most of the land in the vicinity of the hotel on both sides of the river is not available for spoil storage, as development has either taken place or is proposed in the near future. The installation of docks and piers should not be a problem because of the Ashley River's water quality (S. C.) and location below the heavily used Ashley River Bridge. However, the lack of ability to dredge the site could preclude its usefulness for a marina. One option previously available to the marina's siting has been ruled out by allowing the expansion of the piers of the Ashley Marina to extend in front of the hotel property.

This prevents the building of any new docks farther out into the deeper part of the river. The project will also be required to meet the Coastal Council Storm Water Management Guidelines if additional DHEC permits are needed to construct a new lodging facility. Any proposal to construct non-water dependent structures over wetlands would require a Coastal Council permit and is not encouraged.

City permits needed: City of Charleston approval would of course be needed for demolition and construction on this property zoned GB (general business). The property has also recently been placed in the Old and Historic District and is now subject to review by the City's Board of Architectural Review.

LIMEHOUSE PROPERTY

The property is located just north of the intersection of Highway 17 and Lockwood Boulevard. Presently the business sells convenience store groceries, ice and gasoline. Proposed development plans call for the construction of a dry stack marina capable of accommodating a maximum of 100 boats on highland behind the existing building which would remain in use. A "T Shaped" pier constructed in the river would serve as the water access point for the dry stack marina. Launching would be done by fork lift or travel lift. Recently, plans to convert the "T Shaped" pier into marina slips have been discussed with Coastal Council staff.

Coastal Council permits needed: On August 19, 1980, Limehouse Properties was issued a permit to construct a "T Shaped" dock with a 12' X 235 foot walkway, a 15 X 60 foot pierhead, a 9 X 60 foot floating dock on the north and 9 X 25 foot floating dock on the south. A special condition that no wetland area would be filled incidental to construction of this project was also included in the permit.

A new permit would be needed to convert the pier into a marina. Because of the proximity north of the Ashley River Bridge, a marina at this location would be discouraged unless restrictions on the height of boats using the facility were included as permit conditions.

City permits needed: Only building permits will be needed for this property zoned GB (general business). At the time of permit application, the site plan must accommodate the parking spaces required by the additional square footage of the dry stack marina. One space for every 200 square feet is required. The City is concerned about the impact which this development will have on traffic because of the site's proximity to Highway 17 and encourages the developer to discuss ingress and egress provisions with City staff.

SOUTH CAROLINA RESEARCH AUTHORITY PROPERTY

This site is located just north of the Limehouse property, along the Ashley River, south of Brittlebank Park. The South Carolina Research Authority has recently purchased the tract and plans to develop a research and development center which would provide space for industries complementary to M.U.S.C. or many of the defense agencies currently located in Charleston. The School of Architecture at Clemson University is presently in the process of developing a conceptual land use plan for the site, and final recommendations at this point have not been formulated. Discussions with the School of Architecture have determined that all construction with the exception of pedestrian bridges over a small tidal drainage canal and a proposed bulkhead along the Ashley River shoreline will take place on highland.

Coastal Council permits needed: Permits will be needed to construct the bulkhead and pedestrian bridges. Issuance of these permits will be based upon an environmental review. In order to minimize environmental problems, the bulkhead should follow the existing scarp line, and not fill or block vegetation. The pedestrian bridge also must be raised to the height where saltwater vegetation will not be shaded and its growth stunted.

S. C. Coastal Council Storm Water Management Guidelines will also effect the development of this property. The Research and Development Authority will be required to follow the guidelines in their site design and development process.

City permits needed: Because this property is zoned DR-1F (diverse residential), rezoning will be necessary. No difficulties are foreseen. Restrictive covenants will necessitate the Board of Architectural Review's approval of the proposed design.

BRITTLEBANK PARK

Brittlebank Park improvements are at a preliminary planning stage and may involve construction of a boardwalk over the Ashley River marsh and mudflats and building a small fishing pier, boat ramp, tot lot, and small fishing and boat supply store. The boat ramp is proposed to replace the one that the City desires to close at the Municipal Marina under the marina management program. Under this program, motor boat ramp traffic would be moved to Brittlebank Park while the ramp at the marina would be limited to sailboat launchings. Additional parking improvements to handle car and trailer storage are also expected to be needed and built at the park.

Coastal Council Permits Needed: The City of Charleston Department of Leisure Services obtained a permit December 1, 1977 to construct a small fishing pier and build a marsh boardwalk. However, the permit has since

expired and the shoreline along Brittlebank Park has changed quite a bit by siltation and erosion. New permits will be needed to make the proposed improvements. Construction of a boat ramp useable at all tide stages will be difficult and probably costly, as a mudflat extending 200 feet into the river has established itself in front of the park. Either filling or building the ramp on pilings will have to be done in order to make the ramp useable. The filling permit will be much more difficult to obtain than building the ramp on pilings. Another consideration which has to be taken into account is that construction of a pile structure, or bridge, is much more expensive than filling. Obtaining a permit will require that a public use is benefited, a public need is met, and that other alternatives are not feasible.

The building of the boardwalk and fishing piers will also require a new permit. Factors that will be used in making the permit decision will be construction methods and presence of marsh vegetation. The best location of the pier would be at a location where the mudflat would be crossed in the shortest distance, and where vegetation is nonexistent or sparsest. Several alternate sites in Brittlebank Park should be well suited as locations.

The creation of additional marsh is one design component which the City could consider for this site. Upon Coastal Council review, this vegetation could be deemed an appropriate mitigation site for some of the marsh lost to City projects along the Cooper River waterfront.

City permits needed: Only a building permit will be necessary as the property is zoned residentially, permitting by right, parks and playgrounds not operated as business for profit.

¹ S. C. Coastal Council Permitting Rules and Regulations, Dredging and filling. (2)(b) pg. 37

² S. C. Coastal Management Plan - 1983, III - 41.

COOPER RIVER WATERFRONT

This section of the City's Waterfront runs along the Cooper River from Adgers Wharf Park to the State Ports Authority Passenger Terminal. It is the primary waterfront development area for the City of Charleston. The proximity of the waterfront to the market area and other downtown sections of the City make it highly accessible to both tourists and residents of the City. No place else in the City of Charleston is the urban waterfront more accessible and usable. In fact, as the number of residents and visitors are increasing, the amount of waterfront which is accessible to the public is decreasing. Waterfront developments such as Dockside, Ashley Marina and the State Ports Authority continue to control an increasing percentage of Charleston waterfront. Thus, it is essential that the City maximize the use and enjoyment of its remaining waterfront. The construction of a number of different public and semi-public facilities oriented toward the water and capitalizing on its attributes will provide Charleston with a place where its one-half million residents and two and one-half million visitors can gather along the waterfront to use and enjoy it.

The following parcels of land will be involved in the development of this area. A development scenario and analysis of the permit considerations that will be involved in undertaking the proposed development activities are provided for each parcel.

ADGER'S WHARF PARK

Built over a nineteenth century wharf constructed on palmetto logs, this park is a valuable historic resource which is being saved by rehabilitation. The stabilization and restoration of the park includes reconstructing walls, removing the existing earth backfill, lining the wharf's interior with filter fabric and backfilling with lightweight aggregate to prevent further

settlement. Surface improvements, including landscaping and stone dust paving, are also being made to improve the attractiveness of the park. Restoring the park to a stable and safe condition should strengthen the redevelopment area by alleviating a need for recreational space. Construction is complete, thus, City permits have been issued for this area which is zoned DR-1F (diverse residential).

Coastal Council permits needed: A permit to reconstruct the Park was issued on November 15, 1982.

THE WATERFRONT PARK

The Waterfront Park is being constructed on approximately twelve (12) acres along the Cooper River running the length of the waterfront from Vendue Range to North Adgers Wharf. A passive park space, it consists of several elements: landscaped lawns, a palmetto-lined promenade where people can stroll next to the water, a plaza, seating walls, fountains and a fishing pier. A water walk will be incorporated along and at the end of the pier.

A section of Concord Street has been closed and is being raised to extend the park inland to create another walking promenade which will encourage development of the adjoining vacant parcels. The park will be constructed on lands that are underutilized or vacant. Not only will it serve to redress the obsolete or economically marginal uses of lands in the area, but it will also preserve and provide for residents and visitors a needed leisure area with direct access to the waterfront which is now unavailable. Construction is underway.

The City is continuing to work with Sasaki Associates, Inc. to finalize specific design aspects of the park. As a result of Sasaki's consultation and sentiment expressed at a public hearing, a subtidal swale located adjacent to the hard edge of the park is being considered. This swale, sixty-five to

eighty feet wide, is intended to separate the park and its visitors from the marsh island. Since these design elements were not included in the original permit, the City will apply to the Coastal Council for permits to construct the vertical hard edge and swale in the near future.

Coastal Council permits needed: A permit to construct the park was issued on November 15, 1982. Several minor modifications to this permit have been granted. A proposed change to the original permit involves the construction of a vertical hard edge instead of a sloping edge along the waterfront side of the park and the dredging of a subtidal swale adjacent to the new seawall. As the creation of the vertical hard edge and swale are modifications to the original permit, the conditions attached to that original permit requiring the establishment of as much marsh vegetation as possible on the site must be included in any application to modify that permit. A new permit will have to be issued to make any modifications to that original permit.

An additional permit will be needed to construct a proposed walkway behind the S. C. Ports Authority Administration building connecting the Waterfront Park with the Festival Marketplace. The walkway is proposed to be built mostly over highland and on existing rock revetments with only minor crossings over wetland areas. Where these crossings occur, a pedestrian bridge will be proposed. Environmental considerations are minimal.

City permits needed: Only building permits were needed for this development on property zoned DR-1F (diverse residential) and LB (limited business).

FLEET LANDING SITE TO CRUISE SHIP TERMINAL

The land lying East of Concord Street from the Fleet Landing to the Cruise Ship Terminal is severely underutilized. On a daily basis, its only use is as a parking lot. Additionally, the terminal is used approximately 20 days a year, serving 10 ships.

Recently, numerous plans have been discussed for this area including the Marine Science Museum, Tall Ship Berth, Marina and Festival Marketplace. These types of proposed uses would make this portion of Charleston's waterfront more accessible to both residents and visitors. Also these land uses are in accordance with the City's Tourism Impact and Management Study and other planning studies.

Currently the State Ports Authority, which owns the land from the Fleet Landing to the Cruise Ship Terminal, is seeking proposals for the mixed use development of these sites. Selection of a developer is anticipated during the summer of 1985. Obviously specific land uses which will be proposed for this area are unknown. Mixed uses which are likely to be considered for these sites include, but are not limited to, harbor and Fort Sumter tour boat berths, marinas, offices, shops, restaurants and public open space. Proper development is critical to the Cooper River waterfront revitalization and the City's economic development and tourism management. The property lies at the eastern terminus of the City's commercial development, providing entrepreneurs with the opportunities to maximize both the property's commercial and waterfront locations.

Coastal Council permits needed: The redevelopment of this section of Charleston's waterfront will be a cornerstone for the future of the city. It will be important not only to the peninsula area but to the entire state of South Carolina. This small four block area will provide a major public access opportunity for residents and visitors to the coast. Accordingly, it will be used and enjoyed by millions of people over the years. Because of this heavy use, it is extremely important that the persons responsible for the planning and design of this project recognize the environmental sensitivity of the site with which they will be working. This site, being located immediately adjacent and in fact over wetlands and the Cooper River, has a number of

sensitive environmental features which must be recognized and addressed. Council permitting rules and regulations are intended to protect this sensitive environment while at the same time allowing this important development to take place. Any proposals for developing this property should be done with these regulations in mind.

The following comments explaining what Coastal Council permits will be needed are general in nature and are based solely on the existing structures that are present on the site and the environmental characteristics of the waterfront area (marsh, mudflats, depth of water, etc). Regardless of the configuration which the final building pattern takes, there are likely to be several permits which will have to be obtained before construction can begin. These are:

- a) permits to change the use of the Fleet Landing and Passenger Terminal buildings;
- b) a permit for dredging activities;
- c) a permit to undertake any alterations of vegetated wetlands; and
- d) a permit to construct docks, piers, walkways or other structures ancillary to the project.

The following issues relative to the above referenced permits should be considered by the developers and designers of the mixed use project when doing the planning work for the project.

Permits to Change Use of Existing Buildings:

The present building on the Fleet Landing Site is in a poor state of repair, and unlike the passenger terminal, it is likely that a substantial reconstruction or a complete rebuilding of the existing building would be necessary to make the site usable for any purpose. Coastal Council permitting Rules and Regulations specify that water dependent uses are considered to be more appropriate than nonwater dependent uses. If a water dependent use is

located on the site, it is recommended that the building not be expanded over any vegetated wetland areas. If a permit to use the building for a nonwater dependent use is pursued, the following factors which are a part of the Coastal Council's permitting rules and regulations must be considered in the permit deliberations:

- a) a demonstration of an overriding public need;
- b) a demonstration that no feasible alternatives exist; or
- c) a demonstration that there is no significant environmental impact.

The existing building housing the passenger terminal is in good shape, and a major reconstruction is not expected to be needed. However, a permit will be needed to change the use of the building from a passenger terminal into a mixed use facility. The mixed use facility must either demonstrate that it is indeed a water dependent use or that issuance of the permit could meet the conditions mentioned above.

Permits for Dredging Activities:

Much of the wetland area adjacent to the passenger terminal has silted in over the years, causing the establishment of a large mudflat. Any portions of the project requiring boat access will probably need some sort of dredging to maintain sufficient channel depth. It is recommended, for environmental and cost purposes, that dredging needs be minimized and restricted to nonvegetated areas whenever possible. A highland spoil disposal site must also be designated. This spoil site should be sized to accommodate all future spoil disposal needs as dredging will no doubt be an on-going aspect of this project.

Permits to Alter Vegetated Wetlands

Permits would also be needed to undertake any alteration of vegetated wetlands. It is recommended that any encroachment into vegetated wetland areas be avoided wherever possible. However, some wetland alteration might be unavoidable in instances where the project is constructing public access facilities such as walkways, observation decks, docks and piers, which the general public can use to reach and enjoy the waterfront. In these areas different types of mitigation measures should be used to compensate for lost wildlife habitat or the benefits which the wetland is providing in filtering non-point source pollution. These decisions will be made on a case by case basis after an evaluation of the benefits of increased access to the water, public need and the costs in terms of lost wetland areas.

Permits to Construct Docks, Piers, Walkways, Bulkheads or Other Structures Ancillary to the Project

These types of permits are likely to be associated with this type of project. The general considerations usually found with these permits have been already addressed in the preceding three sections. Briefly, these considerations should include designing walkways so that the crossing of vegetated wetlands can be avoided or at least minimized, and locating docks and piers where the dredging requirements will be minimal. Also, any structure crossing over vegetated wetlands should be designed so that it will minimize the shading of any marsh vegetation that it crosses. Bulkheads should be located so that they follow the existing erosional scarp as closely as possible.

City permits needed: The property lying east of Concord Street from Fleet Landing building to the Passenger Ship Terminal is zoned Light Industrial (LI). The LI zone allows almost any kind of development allowed within any other zone except those uses which are only permitted in a Heavy Industrial

zone. Thus, this property can be used by right for a multitude of land uses, including industries, warehouses, residences, offices, retail establishments, restaurants and institutions. In addition, any proposed development will need to meet the land use building height, setback and parking requirements of the City's Zoning Ordinance. Additional permits may be needed depending on the specific project. For instance, any new use of the Fleet Landing pier and building may necessitate new pilings and the demolition of the existing building, requiring a City issued demolition permit.

THE CHARLOTTE STREET WATERFRONT

This area is located along the Cooper River generally from Charlotte Street on the north to Laurens Street on the south. It is an area of mixed uses consisting of a small shipyard, Dockside Condominiums, the banana boat pier and a tugboat docking facility. Two large vacant parcels of land are located in this area; the largest at the foot of Calhoun Street between the Dockside Condominiums and the Town Creek boatyard, and the second located just south of the Dockside Condominiums above Laurens Street. Both parcels are expected to be developed in the near future.

Both parcels have had applications for city development permits denied. On March 20, 1984, the City Board of Zoning Adjustment denied variances for parking, set back, height and vista variances which would have allowed construction of a 366 unit hotel and restaurant facility on the Calhoun Street tract. Also on April 17, 1984, the U. S. Capitol Corporation was denied parking and setback variances which would have permitted them to build a condominium facility on the parcel south of the Dockside Condominiums. The City has also denied leasing the end of Charlotte Street for construction of a pier to house a water taxi, tugboat operation and the Fort Sumter tour boats.

Land use changes are not expected for the boatyard, pier facilities, or Dockside Condominiums. Likely changes occurring in this area will be the anticipated infill development on the vacant parcels within the area previously described. Another likely land use change could occur at the foot of Charlotte Street, currently zoned HI (heavy industrial). Adjacent to this right-of-way is the State Ports Authority and Luden's Marine Equipment. Two development scenarios have been discussed, the first would involve the Ports Authority's acquisition of the right of way for expansion of the Columbus Street Terminal. The second would use the area for passive recreational purposes as recommended in Planning Unit 5's Neighborhood Plan.

Coastal Council permits needed: Because the nature of future development is unknown, Coastal Council permits that will be needed cannot be predicted. Any new major development would need to meet Storm Water Management Guidelines.

City permits needed: Because the two large vacant parcels are zoned GB (general business) land use is only restricted by not allowing industrial uses and parking, setback and height requirements. The City staff is in the process of formulating zoning ordinance text changes for the general business, limited business and light industrial zones which will place maximum dwelling unit limits on high density residential developments. Currently there are no density restrictions on developments of twenty or more units within these zoning districts. These properties are in height district W, requiring the height of the building be no greater than the distance of setback from the nearest front right-of-way and one-half the distance to a side street property line.

As the property is presently owned by the City of Charleston, the Ports Authority would have to acquire the land either by purchase or condemnation. Long range plans of the State Ports Authority do anticipate the need to acquire this right-of-way. In the meantime, this area should remain accessible to the public because of the interesting view of the industrial waterfront. At the time of the State Ports Authority's acquisition, their development plans should consider the preservation of the vista which this site provides to the community. Any private development would be required by the City's height ordinance to preserve this waterfront vista. In addition, these properties lie within the Old and Historic District and any proposed design must receive Board of Architectural Review approval.

MORRISON DRIVE AREA

The Morrison Drive area is located just north of the Cooper River Bridges in the "neck area" of Charleston Peninsula. It is an area of mixed land uses dominated by commercial and light industrial type of uses with a number of mixed residential units of varying densities spread throughout the area.

New Market Creek and its tributary branches flows through the area cutting it in half. The tidal influence of this creek flows well into the central peninsula, reaching I-26 at it's most distant point. Marshes of varying widths border New Market Creek and are found all along the water course. The largest of these marsh areas borders Huger Street, Runey Street and Morrison Drive. These marshes play a very important role acting as filters for urban runoff and providing storage areas during flooding periods.

The City of Charleston's Future Land Use Plan designates this area as the section of the city where future industrial space will be provided. The Land Use Map shows industrially zoned lands throughout Morrison Drive with a particular emphasis given to developing the vacant lands along the eastern side of Morrison Drive. Many undeveloped and underutilized sites are available along Morrison Drive and the transportation and location advantages to this area make it well suited to industrial development.

IMMIGRATION STREET

In the early 70's the Ports Authority constructed, and in 1983 further improved, Immigration Street on a causeway passing through the marshes north of the Cooper River Bridges. This road provides the Columbus Street terminal with an access road leading away from the more congested lower peninsula and onto Morrison Drive and I-26. Near the southern end of Immigration Street, a small shipyard uses the old county jail property for boat storage and minor repairs. Future plans for this property are unknown, although the State Ports Authority is considering relocating and consolidating its railyard within this vicinity.

EASTERN SIDE OF MORRISON DRIVE

Several applications for Coastal Council permits have been made over the last few years to fill wetlands to create property. The S. C. Ports Authority applied in February 1983 to fill wetlands to construct a storage maintenance building. That permit was issued with a provision restricting the amount of the site which could be filled. The permit conditions were never accepted by the Ports Authority and the permit was cancelled.

Also, Moore Drums applied in March 1984 for a permit to fill 1.04 acres of wetlands for commercial property. That permit application was subsequently denied.

The City's recently completed Master Drainage and Floodwater Management Plan proposes a storm water pump station for this area. The outfall will be constructed east of the intersection of Jackson Street and Morrison Drive, just south of the vacant Hoover Plymouth dealership. Any redevelopment of this vacant property should work with the City on providing this easement.

The new International Longshoreman's Building at 910 Morrison Drive has been constructed recently on a highland site zoned HI (heavy industrial). Several other buildings have recently been constructed or extensively remodeled.

Coastal Council permits needed: This area is likely to continue developing into an industrial center. The transportation network and location of the area make it well suited to that role. As it develops and building sites are used up, it is likely that an increased number of applications will be made to fill the wetlands adjacent to Town Creek in order to create building space. This is seen as the dominant trend for this section of the peninsula area. These applications are likely to be denied unless an overriding public need can be shown and the Coastal Council makes a finding that no feasible alternatives to the filling exists.

City permits needed: Any building permit application will be granted based upon meeting the zoning requirements of the property. Land east of the eastern most railway is zone HI (heavy industrial) and in a W height district. Between this railway and Morrison Drive the land is zoned LI (light industrial) and in height district WP.

WESTERN SIDE OF MORRISON DRIVE

Most of the land in this section of the study area consists of small parcels. These parcels frequently contain some highland and some marshland. In order to develop the western side of Morrison Drive, a number of parcels will more than likely have to be assembled. Only the highland areas can be developed without a Coastal Council permit.

Coastal Council permits needed: It is likely that permit requests to fill land in these areas will also increase. These applications are likely to be denied unless a public need can be demonstrated and a finding made that no feasible alternatives exist.

City permits needed: Any building permit application granted will be based upon meeting the zoning requirements of the LI (light industrial) category and W height district.

DRUM ISLAND

CSX Resources, a land division of Seaboard Coastline Railroad, formerly owned the entire island. The S. C. State Ports Authority provides a spoil disposal easement to the Army Corps of Engineers, which use the majority of the island as a spoil disposal area from Charleston Harbor dredging. This easement is valid through 1985, at which time it will expire. The State Ports Authority has condemned the island and upon the completion of a purchase price

settlement, the Army Corps will be granted use of the spoil area indefinitely. The strategic location of the island makes it extremely valuable and important in order for dredging to continue so that a sufficient channel depth in the Harbor can be maintained. In addition, engineering studies have shown the island is accessible only by boat, and will remain so because of established navigation channels.

The northern and southern tips of the island have been set aside as bird nesting areas. These areas are not designated a "sanctuary" nor are they controlled by any authority. The S. C. Wildlife and Marine Resources Division is presently conducting a 3 year survey of the estimated 100,000 wading birds inhabiting the area. Spoiling activities on the island have been conducted in past years by leaving the trees of these sections intact and confining spoiling operations to the central portion of the island.. By using this method the bird nesting area has been only minimally disturbed and the population has thrived. It is recommended that this practice continue.

City permits needed: Drum Island is zoned HI (heavy industrial) and is in a WP height district. Thus any building permit would be required to meet the regulations of this zone. Until such time as the bird nesting area can be designated as a "sanctuary" as recommended in the Planning Unit 5 Neighborhood Plan, the City can reduce the incentives to develop these areas of the island by rezoning them C (conservation).